NAQCC News

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1. CHALLENGE: Our October Challenge deals with our Special Event call of N3A. To master this challenge all you need do is work N3A or operate the call yourself. To operate it, you must have signed up to do so previously. We are accepting no more sign-ups since we gave everyone 2 months to sign-up ending on September 22nd. As usual, everyone who completes the challenge and reports their results according to the rules is entered into a drawing to win a beautiful hand-crafted set of bug or paddle handle pieces donated by their maker Gregg, WB8LZG.

Here's what our first winner Bruce WY7N had to say: "Dear Gregg, Thanks for donating the paddle ends to the NAQCC!
I was the August winner of one set of your wooden paddle ends donated to NAQCC. I chose the Michigan Walnut, Bencher style set. They are lovely.
I should add that even though I won by default (no one else but me was eligible for the drawing in August), it felt like I had won a million bucks. I'm still very excited!
Believe it or not, when I heard I had won the set, I was uncertain if I would actually retrofit my chrome Bencher paddles. I'm fond of the clear plexiglass ends that are standard. I think they look cool. However, all indecision dissappeared after I hurriedly opened the package received from John Shannon. The wood and finish are beautiful. My Bencher paddles will soon be Black Tie!
When the retrofit is done, I'll get my camera out and do a write up on how happy I am and how great the paddle ends look. I'll have to shine up that chrome for the photo shoot!"

We'll look forward to that photo. Remember you have a chance to experience Bruce's excitement and pleasure yourself by participating in our challenges.

If you have an idea for a challenge, please let us know and we'll consider it.

Full Challenge info here.

2. SEPTEMBER SPRINT RESULTS: The latest version of our autologger worked flawlessly with one exception and made my job of posting scores and cross-checking logs much easier in turn. We hope it made submitting your log much easier for you as well. The one exception? Dan N4FI uses a router which connects to the Internet through a proxy server and a strong firewall in addition to that. Dan's setup makes our autologger page look like a local page on his computer to the Alltel server which doesn't like that and won't process the mailform script. I get the same result here when I access the script via a local autologger page on my computer. I want to thank Dan who took a lot of his time to help me figure out why the autologger didn't work for him. I don't have a solution for Dan, but at least we know what the problem is in his case.

The autologger also may have contributed to breaking our record for number of logs received that we set just last month. We received 56 logs this month vs. our previous record of 50 last month. Around 40 of the 56 came via the autologger. Just to give you an idea of how good that is, in the early days of the Spartan Sprints (probably the currently most popular QRP sprint) it took them until their 57th and 58th sprint to get two consecutive 50+ log reports. We did it in our 34th and 35th sprint. So take a moment now to pat yourself on the back. Thank you.

Because of the large number of logs received, I am no longer sending out a list of log corrections to each participant unless those corrections involve a change of score. If a QSO is missing in the log of a station you 'worked', I will email you to give you a chance to check with the other station to see if the QSO was unintentionally omitted from the log he sent me. That check determines if the QSO is removed or kept. I don't think any other contest or sprint is that considerate, but then we are 'The Club With a Difference'. If you'd like a complete analysis of your log, just email me (K3WWP) and ask for one.

STATS (last month in parentheses):

Logs - 56 (50)
Stations in logs - 88 (94)
First hour QSO's - 347 (441)
Second hour QSO's - 379 (392)
Total QSO's - 726 (833)
20M QSO's - 38 (163)
40M QSO's - 526 (571)
80M QSO's - 162 (99)

I guess winter is coming. 20M QSO's way down, and 80M QSO's up by about 60%.

WINNERS:

CD's - KI4GLH
1st SWA - KI4GLH
2nd SWA - KG4W
1st Gain - n/a
Special Award (Highest score for someone using 4W or less power) - W0JFR
Top Non-Winner - K8DD

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Actually everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because the listing of your results on our web site shows the ham

radio world that you are interested in preserving CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

We had 9 stations who didn't submit a log show up from 5 to 16 times in the 56 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 9 and many others will be back next month AND submit a log.

We welcome 12 hams who submitted a sprint log for the first time. We hope these folks will continue to participate and report their results: KG4W, K8DD, W0JFR, K5BGB, K9DXA, K8AZT, WA1LWS, KE4I, AA9L, WA2TDW, K6BFA, KG2GL.

Incidentally, here is a picture of the key that Stan K4UK used in the sprint. It was made for Stan by Hector NP4FW. That gives me an idea for a future Special Award for a sprint. Using a homebrew straight key. So think about making up a homebrew key now to have it ready.

Full sprint info here.

3. LATEST BEAR HUNT NEWS: From our Bear Master Ron, K5DUZ: Due to a lack of interest, compounded by the currently marginal propagation conditions, the NAQCC WAS Bear Hunt is going into "hibernation" for an undetermined period of time. The Bear Master is open to suggestions as to how the Bear Hunt could be improved, such as changing it into a yearly or quarterly contest, dedicating it to portable operations, etc. The original premise was to encourage the more "rare" states to get on the air using QRP CW in order to facilitate 2XQRP (two way QRP) contacts. Please send a "Beargram" with your suggestions to **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

Full bear hunt info here.

4. FEATURED AWARD OF THE MONTH: Each month in our end-of-the-month newsletter we are going to talk a bit about one of our awards.

North American QRP CW Club
Participation Certificate
This is to certify that
NAQCC
has accumulated the most points in our Participation Award for the year of 2006 among Eastern USA members.
Date
signed
Awards Chairman

This month it's the Participation Award. We want to reward those members who participate regularly in our club events. Points are awarded for participating and submitting a log for our sprint and challenge each month. Points are totalled at the end of the year and the one with the highest total in the USA East, USA West, and DX divisions are awarded the handsome certificate shown here. Also this year the highest (non-officer) scorer overall for the year is awarded a FREE FISTS one-year membership or a one-year renewal for anyone who is already a FISTS member. The awards this year are pretty much clinched, but think about next year and make your plans now. This award is renewed each year, and every club member starts off even at the beginning of a year.

Full NAQCC Awards info here.

4a. AWARD WINNERS FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS:
K4PBY - 1000 MPW #0032
WY3H - 2XQRP 500 Pts #0004
K4PBY - 30-30 #0006
NU7T - WMA Advanced #0004
K3WWP - WAC endorsement for 20M

Full List of all award winners here.

5. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: October marks the 3rd anniversary of the NAQCC. To celebrate, we're operating a special event call of N3A for the whole month. We've devoted a special page on the web site to keep you up to date on this activity. It will be updated regularly as new info comes in.

We would like to have all 10 call areas active in our October sprint. So far we have N3A/3 and N3A/6 signed up for the sprint. Be sure to read the next newsletter as soon as possible after it is posted to see if you may have a chance to fill in a remaining call area if our already signed-up participants can't make the sprint.

Full N3A information here.

- Over our three year existence, we've had some of our policies questioned. Not necessarily criticized, but folks just wondering why we do things the way we do. Two of the things I'd like to address here are why we have separate categories in our sprints based on antenna type, and why we have a huge bonus for straight key operation.

First the reason for the antenna type categories is basically a simple one. It is grossly unfair to expect someone with a simple random wire in his attic to compete against someone with an 8 element beam on a 60 foot tower. Unless the guy with the beam is totally incompetent, he will beat the random wire guy every time. So we let the beam guys compete only against similarly equipped stations. We welcome the beam stations into our club and our sprints even though we do like to emphasize the use of simple wire antennas.

Also amateur radio exists strictly because it is a service to the public, especially in emergency situations. In an emergency, the only antennas available may be simple hunks of wire. By emphasizing the use of simple wire antennas in its sprints and other activities, the NAQCC is contributing to emergency preparedness. If you learn to effectively use a simple wire antenna in our sprints, you will be prepared for any emergency situation in which you may no longer have access to those big towers.

One more thing deserves mention. Many folks cannot afford elaborate antennas or must live in antenna restricted environments. There is virtually no place that a simple (cheap) wire antenna cannot be installed in some manner or other. By showing how effective such simple antennas can be, we encourage those in such situations that they too can still enjoy this wonderful hobby.

As to getting a huge bonus for using a straight key, again the emergency scenario applies here. In an emergency a straight key may be the only means of communications, and by encouraging its use with the bonus, we are making sure that our members remain trained in the use of a straight key.

Also the use of a straight key in contesting is just plain fun and nostalgic. Many members have said that this adds much enjoyment to our sprints.

The use of a straight key slows down the pace of our sprints and makes them available to those hams who may not otherwise be able to enter and experience the thrill and excitement of contesting. Remember our sprints were never designed to be a frantic high speed type of activity in which only the contesting experts can compete successfully. However we do invite the top notch contesters to participate and help out the contesting newcomers. We are grateful to those who do so, and those you help out appreciate it.

Finally by exposing more hams to contesting with our low-key sprints we are providing a source of contesters for the future. Many become interested in contesting by trying it out in our sprints, and move on to the bigger, faster, more hectic contests and thus provide a pool of contest operators so future generations of hams can continue to enjoy this wonderful sport of ham radio contesting. Every present day contester started off slowly somewhere sometime. No one was born with the skills of a top contester. They were developed over the years. Again we hope that such seasoned contesters will enter our sprints and help to train the newcomers to contesting who are just learning all the skills and tricks.

- In our continuing co-operation with FISTS to promote each other's events, we remind you that the FISTS fall sprint takes place in October on Saturday the 13th. See http://www.fists.org/sprints.html for details and join in the fun. Be sure to mention the NAQCC when you submit your results.

- We are continuing to get a slow influx of member pictures and bio's for our members pictures page on the web site. However we need more. We're booked up through November, but need you to submit your info for December and beyond.

If you don't want to send a full scale picture and bio, you're welcome to send a small face shot for our member gallery at any time. The pictures are 120 x 120 pixels in size, but we can re-size any good quality facial picture except something that is too very small. Just email us a .jpg file and we'll fix it up and post it in the gallery.

6. MEMBER NEWS: This is my personal favorite section of the newsletter. I love reading about what our members are doing. Also seeing pictures of you and your activities is wonderful. So keep sending in your stories and pictures, please.

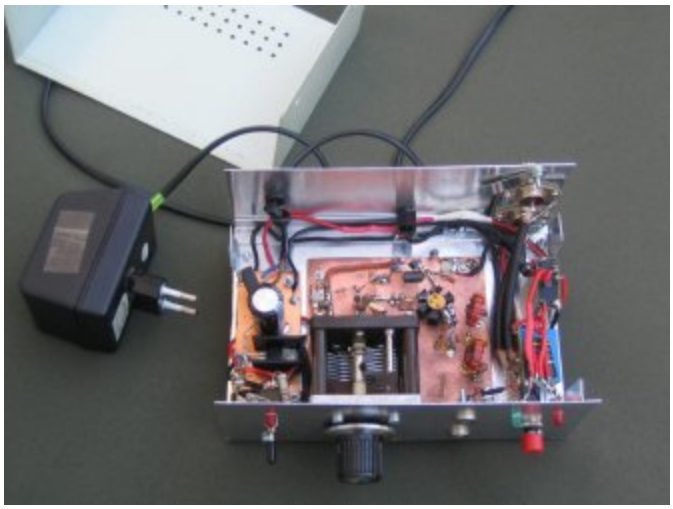
We've received the following news items for this issue. Is yours among them? Send your news to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**.

- **From Martin, F6HIQ #1939** - Each time, I really enjoy reading NAQCC's newsletter... waiting for better propagation on 20 meters. I've built my first 20M-CW-QRP TX, the old OXO Transmitter, by GM3OXX, in the G3RJV version, with VXO (14,058.00 crystal, 10-60 pF VC, and 10 uH core inductor). All home made, except the top cover!

I use it with my commercial TCVR (IC 718) as RX, with 250 Hz CW filter. I enclose a view of this TX. Out of the box, is a 220/12V AC transformer, and on the left side of the rig, is the regulated 12 V DC power supply (from ARRL's QRP Power book). I plan to build now the Zack Lau's transmitter (VXO controlled).

I enclose a second picture : a view of my three band GP antenna (JayBeam VR3), on the balcony, at about 40' above ground level. With that old antenna, I've worked 49 US states with 100W output, and I hope to do the same in the future, or better, operating QRP...

With my most friendly 73' to all of you...



- **Greg, N3ZL #1876 has been in the news.**

Greg's selection for the Hiram Percy Maxim award made the local newspaper. See here for a very nice write-up about Greg.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.